

**Opening Statement of Chairman Greg Walden  
Subcommittee on Energy Markup of “H.R. 2786, H.R. 2883, H.R. 2910,  
H.R. \_\_\_, Hydropower Policy Modernization Act, and H.R. \_\_\_,  
Enhancing State Energy Security Planning and Emergency  
Preparedness Act of 2017”  
June 22, 2017**

*(As prepared for delivery)*

This subcommittee has been hard at work advancing solutions that seek to modernize our nation’s energy infrastructure and improve our energy security. To date, we have held over 10 infrastructure related hearings and briefings, and just last week the House cleared ten committee bills to boost our energy infrastructure and increase energy efficiency.

This Congress, we’ve examined the roadblocks to energy infrastructure and barriers to the gas pipeline permitting process, cross-border energy infrastructure, and hydropower facilities. Our previous work examining these issues has informed the bills under consideration today. We’ve learned that oftentimes dozens of agencies are involved in the permitting process. It’s time we address these issues head on and improve the federal licensing process to ensure we get projects to market faster. Doing this would create good-paying jobs and capitalize on America’s growing energy potential.

These bills would strengthen the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's role as the lead agency for coordinating the necessary environmental reviews and required permits – effectively streamlining the approval process to cut down unnecessary delays and challenges.

I'd also like to note that hydropower is of particular importance to me. In my home state of Oregon, over 40 percent of our energy is produced from hydropower at relatively low costs to consumers across my district. Recently, I toured The Dalles Dam in Wasco County, Oregon, and saw first-hand the technology generating clean hydropower for the Pacific Northwest. We have a great opportunity in this committee to help increase the use of our nation's hydro resources to better utilize this renewable energy source. The two bills before us today make meaningful improvements to the hydropower licensing process – modernizing our federal policies and promoting this renewable energy source to ensure consumers across the country receive affordable and reliable electricity from hydropower.

Pipeline and hydropower bills aren't the only bills under consideration today either. New vulnerabilities and threats to our nation's energy infrastructure and changes in the ways we

generate, transmit, and deliver power continues evolve. States are now at the forefront of energy security and emergency preparedness. The Enhancing State Energy Security Planning and Emergency Preparedness Act would reauthorize and help to focus DOE's State Energy Program to strengthen states' capabilities to ensure our energy infrastructure is protected against physical and cybersecurity threats.

Cumulatively, these bills represent an important step in our efforts to put consumers' interests first while working to enact reforms that build on our energy abundance, modernize our energy infrastructure, and grow our economy and create good jobs. I thank my colleagues for their hard-work on these bills and I look forward to continuing to work in a bipartisan manner as we track towards a full committee markup.